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LICHTENSTEIN, J. *Commentar zum Matthäus-Evangelium*. Nach der Neubearbeitung des Verfassers herausgegeben von PROFESSOR H. LAIBLE und PAUL LEVERTOFF. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1913. 143 pages. M. 2.50.

This book is a rare specimen, a modern Jewish Christian's translation of the Gospel of Matthew into Hebrew, together with a brief commentary on the translated text. The form in which it now appears, as No. 4 of the publications of the Institutum Delitzschianum, at Leipzig, is a second edition, thoroughly revised by the author and published after his death by Laible and Levertoff. The chief value of the volume lies in the parallels from Jewish writings, talmuds, targums, and Midrash, copiously adduced on every page. Its tendency is exhibited on the one hand by the fact that it breathes throughout an earnest missionary spirit, on the other by the very conservative attitude of the author in regard to such matters as the virgin birth, fulfilment of prophecy, etc. Nevertheless, the exegetical notes show acquaintance with such modern literature as Dalman's *Worte Jesu*.

M. S.

KENT, C. F. *The Life and Teachings of Jesus, according to the Earliest Records*.

New York: Scribner, 1913. 337 pages. \$1.25.

Professor Kent thinks it desirable to find a substitute for the complex and laborious method of using a harmony of the Gospels for the study of the life and the teaching of Jesus. The particular feature of his book is the presentation of such a substitute. He has arranged and condensed the gospel narratives into a single continuous account of Jesus' ministry. The material used is chiefly taken from Mark and from the discourse sections of Matthew and Luke. Little is introduced from the Gospel of John, except in the last chapter on "Jesus the Savior of Mankind," where the christological teaching of the book is summed up. The author has constantly to choose between the parallel accounts of incidents and teachings in two or three of the Gospels; he has also to decide from time to time what synoptic material he will omit as not belonging to "the oldest records imbedded in the four New Testament Gospels." But the reader is not sufficiently informed as to the process employed, as to the criteria by which the author determines what is original with Jesus and what is to be regarded as modification, accretion, or supplementation of the Apostolic age. Besides, one might surely have expected to find in the book an index of Scripture passages, showing just what material had been introduced from each Gospel, and the particular page on which it appears and receives exposition.

Two mechanical features of the book are objectionable. The first is the absence of regular division and chapter numbers. High roman numerals are used in this book consecutive with Old Testament passages similarly arranged and enumerated in the four volumes of the "Historical Bible" series which precede the present one. Such a system of notation is intelligible, but so far as this life of Jesus is concerned it is to the last degree impracticable and irritating, for the high roman numerals are clumsy, slow to read, and confusing to use in referring to the chapters of the book. The second defect is the glaring disproportion between the large black-face type in which the gospel passages are given and the very small type in which the body of the book is printed.

The contents of the book are well arranged. The material from the Gospels is presented in an English translation that seems to be based upon the Revised Version, and yet is reworked by the author into a more modern style. The manner of expository

tion is simple, straightforward, and attractive. There is some critical discussion, as of the miracles, on pp. 97-108, where the author concludes: "Thrown into the crucible of historical criticism, the great majority of the gospel miracles emerge unscathed"; and of the resurrection, on pp. 298-310, where he bespeaks a hearing for the view that these appearances were "inner spiritual experiences." But the author does not enter upon the treatment of the newer fundamental historical questions with which New Testament scholars are now engaged. The book represents in general the commonly accepted conservative views of the life and teaching of Jesus, for the practical purpose (one may perhaps judge) of making the work available for use in Sunday-school and Y.M.C.A. classes (see p. vi, last paragraph). Doubtless also it is intended for college courses in Bible-study, and is the kind of book some instructors will use. Yet it is too brief, simple, superficial, and non-critical for a thorough historical study of the life and teaching of Jesus; the point of view, the principles of investigation and interpretation, the genetic and comparative method which belong to the scientific study of history, come slowly to be applied to the historical study of the Bible, even in the colleges where other history and literature are scientifically taught.

C. W. V.

LESTER, CHARLES S. *The Historic Jesus: A Study of the Synoptic Gospels.*

New York: Putnam, 1912. 426 pages. \$2.50.

Mr. Lester feels that the most important of all religious questions are those which center in the life and teaching of Jesus. He finds the gospel figure of Jesus overlaid with mythology and dogmatic fictions, and he seeks to recover the real Jesus of history back of these theological interpretations of his person and work. When this is accomplished, he holds that Jesus will "be recognized as the permanent source of the moral power of the world" (p. vii).

The author does not claim to be a first-hand scholar in dealing with the fundamental historical, psychological, and philosophical problems. He has, however, given studious attention to the recent literature of the subject, and has introduced us to the books from which he has learned most (see the list on pp. 415-17). His major interest, as one readily sees, is with respect to the supernatural element in the Gospels, which in his judgment must be wholly set aside as beyond the historical facts of Jesus' career. The critical process for obtaining this result consists in an entire disregard of the Fourth Gospel, and a sifted use of the material contained in the Synoptics. He has chosen Wellhausen's commentary on Mark as his specific guide. This leads Mr. Lester to deal more with the events of Jesus' life than with his teaching. In fact, he feels that the teaching of Jesus, as it is contained in the Synoptic Gospels, is pretty much as Jesus himself gave it, with the exception of the claim to messiahship and the theological interpretation of his death. But the events of his life reported by the Gospels are in need of rigid investigation.

Mr. Lester's judgment goes with the radical school in almost every case with which he deals. The Gospels were written late—Mark *ca.* 67 A.D., Luke by an unknown author *ca.* 100 A.D., Matthew by an unknown author *ca.* 120 A.D.; the last preceded by an Aramaic gospel bearing the name of Matthew, written in Judea *ca.* 75 A.D. The chronology of the ministry is not worked out fully, but the public life is thought to have occupied at least three years, beginning in 29 A.D. and ending with the crucifixion, in 32 A.D.; the latter a date that has almost no advocates. The Gospel of Mark, although more historical regarding Jesus than Luke and Matthew, is nevertheless an